

Message Text

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72

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 CU-02 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 SCCT-01 SY-05

OPR-02 PER-01 /080 W

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P R 110950Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9718

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BM

SUBJECT: GUB CRACKDOWN ON DEMONSTRATORS; LABOR UNREST SPREADS

REF: RANGOON 1553

1. IN THE GUB'S FIRST SIGNIFICANT STEP TO CURB STUDENT LED DEMONSTRATIONS THAT HAVE OCCURRED SPORADICALLY IN RANGOON AND MANDALAY IN PAST SEVERAL DAYS, BURMA ARMY TROOPS MOVED INTO SHWEDAGON PAGODA EARLY MORNING JUNE 11 AND DETAINED 213 STUDENTS WHO HAD TAKEN REFUGE THERE JUNE 10, EVIDENTLY WITHOUT VIOLENCE OR BLOODSHED. MOVE ON TO PAGODA SANCTUARY BY BOOTED TROOPS REPRESENTED SHARP DEPARTURE FROM BURMESE BUDDHIST CUSTOM AND VIOLATION OF BUDDHIST LAW AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER MONKS, WHO HAVE THUS FAR NOT PARTICIPATED IN THE CURRENT STUDENT AND LABOR UNREST, MAY DO SO ONCE NEWS OF THE INCIDENT SPREADS.

2. RANGOON MILITARY ADMINISTRATION ALSO ANNOUNCED PROHIBITION OF DEMONSTRATIONS, PUBLIC GATHERINGS OR ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTEST. PRIMARY AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN CAPITOL CLOSED JUNE 11 (ALTHOUGH REMAINED OPEN IN MANDALAY) AND RANGOON MILITARY COMMANDER SET
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6:00 PM JUNE 11 DEADLINE FOR ALL STUDENTS TO CLEAR UNIVERSITY AND

INSTITUTE CAMPUSES. AT PRESENT, FEW STUDENTS ARE VISIBLE AT THE MAIN RASU CAMPUS. NO CURFEW HAS YET BEEN ANNOUNCED.

3. ON THE LABOR FRONT, SITDOWN STRIKES WERE REPORTED TO HAVE SPREAD TO THE SINMILAIK DOCKYARDS, THE BURMA PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY, A COOKING OIL PLANT IN RANGOON, OTHER RAILWAY REPAIR FACILITIES, AND POSSIBLY THE DOCK WORKERS. A STRIKE AT THE STRATEGIC PETROLEUM DISTRIBUTION PLANT WAS REPORTEDLY HEADED OFF BY FREE HANDOUT OF RICE. AMCONSUL MANDALAY REPORTS THAT PALEIK TEXTILE MILL SOUTH OF MANDALAY HAS JOINED STRIKE AS HAVE THE RAILWAY AND ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION WORKSHOPS. A FAIRLY SMALL CROWD OF A FEW HUNDRED WORKERS FROM THE TEXTILE PLANT PARADED IN MANDALAY JUNE 10 WITHOUT INCIDENT AND UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTED TO WIN SUPPORT BY MONKS. CITY NOW QUIET.

4. RANGOON TOO IS GENERALLY CALM ALTHOUGH TROOP DEPLOYMENT HAS BEEN INCREASED. SEVERAL TRUCKS OF ARMY AND NAVY TROOPS AND SOME SMALL ARMORED CARS WERE SEEN IN DOWNTOWN RANGOON AND IN THE INSEIN AREA BY MIDDAY, APPARENTLY IN A SHOW OF FORCE. ONE UNCONFIRMED REPORT CLAIMS THAT TROOPS ORDERED STRIKING WORKERS AT THE INSEIN LOCOMOTIVE REPAIR SHOP TO LEAVE THE PREMISES AND WHEN THEY REFUSED, FIRED IN THE AIR. AT LEAST SOME GUB OFFICES ARE OPERATING WITH SKELETON STAFFS TODAY DUE TO HEAVY ABSENTEEISM.

5. GUB CONTINUES CAMPAIGN TO LINK STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS TO BCP AND IN THE PROCESS IS GIVING THE BCP MORE PUBLICITY THAN IT HAS ENJOYED IN YEARS. PRESS JUNE 11 PUBLISHED TEXT OF LENGTHY BCP CLANDESTINE BROADCAST OF JUNE 10 SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND WORKERS AND LISTING THE POPULAR GRIEVANCES (MANY OF THEM VALID) AGAINST THE NE WIN REGIME. PRESS ALSO PUBLISHED EXCERPTS OF STUDENT HANDOUTS, CITING SIMILARITY TO BCP RHETORIC, INCLUDING ALLEGED REFERENCES TO "PEOPLE'S VICTORIES" IN CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM (WE HAVE YET TO FIND MENTION OF INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LEAFLETS THAT HAVE COME TO OUR ATTENTION), NOR HAVE WE EVIDENCE OF BCP INVOLVEMENT.) MEANWHILE, BSPP CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS CONTINUE TO TOUR COUNTRY EXPLAINING GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND LISTENING TO GRIEVANCES; CEC MEMBER BRIGADIER THAUNG DAN ALLEGEDLY TOLD WORKERS AT SAGAING TEXTILE MILL THAT FIXED PRICES WOULD BE INSTITUTED ON ESSENTIAL FOODSTUFFS WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN FREE MARKET PRODUCTS (FISH PASTE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHILIES, ONIONS, ETC.)

5. COMMENT: GUB REACTION TO EVENTS THUS FAR HAS BEEN RATHER RESTRAINED ALTHOUGH SWEEP OF SHWEDAGON COULD PROVOKE SOME ADVERSE REACTION AND POSSIBILITY OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN SECURITY FORCES AND STRIKERS MAY BE ON INCREASE. GUB APPARENTLY HOPES TO END STUDENT DISORDERS QUICKLY BY DISBANDING OR DETAINING THEM AND

DIVIDE STUDENT AND LABOR MOVEMENTS. INDUSTRIAL UNREST COULD
THEN BE TREATED SEPARATELY, PERHAPS WITH COMMODITY PAYOFFS, SINCE
WORKERS ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH BREAD AND BUTTER THAN POLITICAL
ISSUES, BUT IF NECESSARY WITH FORCE.
OSBORN

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